



## Agenda

### SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MEETING

**Wednesday, July 16, 2014 - 5:30 p.m.**

**Saul Room, Atrium Building, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
99 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Ave., Eugene**

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**Sustainability Commissioners:** Shawn Boles, Howard Bonnett, Summer Cox, Joanne Gross, Dawn Lesley, Sasha Luftig, Steve Newcomb, Justin Overdevest, Howard Saxion, Carolyn Stein, David tam, Sue Wolling and Alan Zelenka

**Staff:** Babe O'Sullivan, Matt McRae

	<u>Starting time</u>
1. Opening	5:30 p.m.
- Action item: review agenda	
- Action item: approve minutes of the June 18, 2014 meeting	
2. Public comment	5:35 p.m.
3. Sub-committee reports	5:45 p.m.
- Information item: updates from sub-committees	
4. Commission work-planning retreat preparation	6:15 p.m.
- Discussion item: review of FY 14 work plan accomplishments	
- Discussion item: feedback from Mayor and City Manager	
5. BREAK	7:00 p.m.
6. Commission work-planning retreat preparation cont'd	7:10 p.m.
- Discussion item: working agreements, dissenting opinions	
7. Election of officers	8:00 p.m.
8. Item from commissioners and staff	8:10 p.m.
- Information item: updates from commissioners and staff	
9. Closing: next meeting, other follow-up	8:25 p.m.

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**Next scheduled meeting of the Sustainability Commission will be July 16, 2014, in the Saul Room, Atrium Building.**

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*The Sustainability Commission welcomes your interest in these agenda items. All meetings are open to the public and are wheelchair accessible. For the hearing impaired, an interpreter FM assistive listening system can be provided with 48 hours notice prior to the meeting. Spanish language interpretation may also be provided given 48 hours notice. To arrange for these services or for more information about this commission, contact commission staff at 682-5010.*

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**FY 15 Sustainability Commission  
Work Planning Retreat Preparation**

**Proposed Retreat Outcomes:**

- The commission agrees on specific goals for their work in FY 15 (July 2014-June 2015).
- The commission agrees on a work plan that guides them in carrying out those goals.
- The commission agrees on how its work plan will be implemented.

*Retreat preparation at the July 16 meeting:*

- Review FY 14 work plan and findings from OLIS student report.
- Briefly review key accomplishments and challenges from the commission's work over the last year.
  - What does this suggest about the FY 15 work plan?
  - How can the commission be most effective in reaching its goals for FY 15?
- Discuss feedback from Mayor, City Manager.
- Identify information needs to successfully develop and adopt a work plan at the retreat.
- Review retreat logistics, facilitation and format.

*Pre-retreat homework:*

- Sub-committees prepare and submit a brief summary of what they have accomplished to date and next steps.
- What issues would you like the commission to consider for its upcoming work plan?
  - Which work plan items from the past year should carry forward?
  - What new items would you suggest?
- Provide input regarding the work plan format: are there any changes commissioners would make to the format of the current work plan matrix?

*Pre-retreat reflection questions for Commissioners:*

- In what ways do you think the work of the commission makes a difference and has the greatest value and/or impact?
- Given our knowledge, skills, connections and resources, how could we increase our impact in terms of making Eugene a more sustainable community?
- Looking back from July 1, 2015, what is one thing you hope the commission will have accomplished?

# Community Voice on Sustainability



Gary Halvorson, Oregon State Archives

December

Final Report

**Prepared for:**  
The Eugene Sustainability Commission

**Prepared by:**  
Sarah Allison  
Carolyn Candela

## **SPECIAL THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This report would not have been possible without the participation of our many interviewees, both associated with the Sustainability Commission and not. We would also like to acknowledge the Community Service Center (CSC) for the design of the report template.

We would like to extend a special thanks to Babe O'Sullivan for her guidance on this project.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the fall of 2013, the Eugene Sustainability Commission engaged graduate students from the Oregon Leadership in Sustainability (OLIS) Certificate Program to investigate the Commission and other platforms that provide community engagement in city sustainability initiatives.

## Problem Statement

To help provide a balance between the short-term pressures on policy makers and long-term goals of sustainability, some cities have created sustainability commissions of some kind to provide formal advice to the governing city body. The Sustainability Commission has provided input for City initiatives concerning sustainability for more than six years, but there are concerns that there may be better ways to achieve their mission.

**Specifically, the OLIS team will explore how well the current Sustainability Commission fulfills its stated purpose, alternative models for accomplishing that purpose, and potential expansions of the purpose.**

## Methods

The OLIS team used interviews, internet research, field research, and a literature review, to evaluate these questions.

In order to attain broader knowledge and perspective into the topic, the team conducted research on other U.S cities with similar sustainability frameworks within their local government. Cities that the team has identified include:

- Sunnyvale, CA
- Bloomington, IN
- Carbondale, IL
- Little Rock, AR
- Portland, OR

## Study Approach

For the project, the OLIS team sought to answer four study questions.

1. How does the existing structure and manifestation of the Sustainability Commission support the Mission Statement?
2. How effective are alternative models from other jurisdictions at supporting short-and long-term environmental, social and economic well being in their communities?
3. Does the community of Eugene have deeper sustainability needs that would be better served by an organization with a broader or different focus and/or structure?
4. What are the benefits of changing the current structure/function of the Sustainability Commission as opposed to, or in addition to creating a new organization to support the overall mission in a different capacity?



## Findings

Early interviews suggested a framework of four different types of sustainability organizations ranging from internal to external. Of the structures that we have found precedent for (internal office, advisory body, coalition, and individual issue groups) the only one not present in Eugene is a broad sustainability coalition. Based on our understanding of what such a coalition entails, we feel that it would serve fundamentally different needs than those currently served by the Sustainability Commission.

When asked about how well the Sustainability Commission accomplishes its mission, many interviewees responded by stating that the commission itself develops strong ideas that are necessary to achieve the mission, but is often held back by City Council. One stakeholder suggested that finding a better approach to working with City Council may help the commission to more effectively accomplish its mission.

In our review of alternative models, we looked at sustainability-focused advisory bodies in other cities, coalitions, and the university system as an analogy. Each advisory body was created out of the specific culture of its jurisdiction. The key takeaway from examining these different commissions was that the particular variations (number of members, method of appointment, advisory focus, or sustainability focus) had little to do with how well the commission functioned.

Since we found that there are aspects of the commission that are currently working, we concluded that it would not be beneficial or necessary for the City of Eugene to create a new organization altogether. While having an outside organization such as the Corvallis Coalition may work effectively in certain cities, this structure may not fit well within the political culture of Eugene.

## Recommendations

One of our primary recommendations is that the Sustainability Commission engage in an internal visioning exercise. In order to be effective, recommendations must be accompanied by political pressure. That pressure can be in the form of large scale community presence, key stakeholder influence, or side benefits (e.g. we want you to do this because it is sustainable, but you want to do it because it saves you money). Standing relationships with the Commission or individual commissioners can be a great foundation for this kind of influence.

The OLIS team recommends several strategies to increase capacity, which include strengthening the liaison system, alumni relations, and subcommittees. In situations where issues exist that are not addressed by other organizations, the Commission can provide needed focus. In situations where another organization is putting effort toward an issue that the Commission deems urgent, the Commission can take on a supportive role to bolster those efforts. This approach will help to mitigate capacity issues and provide focus for the group.

## Conclusions

The OLIS team believes that the Sustainability Commission provides a unique service to the City of Eugene that could not be provided as well by any other type of organization. By acting more strategically, the Commission can increase its impact on the City and community of Eugene. These strategies can provide increased focus, energy and visibility to help move Eugene towards a more comprehensive path to sustainability.

## INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2013, the Eugene Sustainability Commission engaged graduate students from the Oregon Leadership in Sustainability (OLIS) Certificate Program to investigate the Commission and other platforms that provide community engagement in city sustainability initiatives. This investigation included an evaluation of the Sustainability Commission through interviews and research, and an overview of alternative models. The OLIS team also used a literature review to establish a baseline of best practices.

### Problem Statement

Local government action is often considered the best option for promoting sustainability because local governments are more nimble than state or federal governments; they are more susceptible to local pressure; and action at the city level is supported by international networks and programs. At the same time, however, local politicians tend to focus on short-term projects and actions that they can point to as evidence of success to further their careers. Local politicians are also responsible for responding to the needs of their constituencies, which tend to be expressed as immediate, current issues. Sustainability issues, by their very nature, often have long time horizons, and may not produce tangible benefits within a person's lifetime, let alone their term of office. To help provide a balance between the short-term pressures on policy makers and long-term goals of sustainability, some cities have created sustainability commissions of some kind to provide formal advice to the governing city body.

Different commissions have different levels of authority, different structures, and different scopes of what they address. These differences can lead to different levels of efficacy, but that efficacy also depends a great deal on the particular context of the city in question. What works extremely well in one city is not necessarily transferable to another. It is possible, however to get a sense of "best practices" by reviewing a number of such commissions, and evaluating how and how well they accomplish their missions.

Another consideration is the existence of different types of sustainability advocacy groups. While sustainability commissions are internal, formally chosen and with an official advisory capacity, other groups are based in the community at large, and follow a somewhat different scope of activity. There may be some overlap between the types of organizations, but a community organization will almost never have the same level of advisory authority that a formal commission has. A third type of sustainability advocacy group focuses on coordinating individual community groups. This can help separate organizations come together to advocate for a common cause, to avoid redundant efforts or diluted attendance. Some cities have only one type of organization, while others may use all, a few or none.

The Sustainability Commission of the City of Eugene was created in March of 2007. This 13 member commission serves to advise the City Manager and City Council on the initiation or development of sustainability-focused programs for the City of Eugene. The mission of the Sustainability Commission is: "The Sustainability Commission works to create a healthy

community now and in the future by proposing measurable solutions to pressing environmental, social and economic concerns to the City of Eugene, its partners and its people.”

While there are many community groups in Eugene that advocate for a particular sustainability cause, Eugene lacks a strong networking agent for those groups. The Eugene Neighborhood Leaders Council has some networking goals and a committee devoted to sustainability issues, but it does not focus on providing a unified voice for the community on sustainability issues. As a result, the sustainability message from the community is generally fragmented, lacking significant impact.

The Sustainability Commission has provided input for City initiatives concerning sustainability for more than six years, but there are concerns that there may be better ways to achieve their mission. In recent years, the Commission has struggled with questions of efficacy in terms of having their recommendations be put into practice. As an advisory body, filled with volunteer citizens, the Commission has limited authority and capacity to enact its own programs. Its current work plan primarily includes action items around research, engagement with city processes, and communication of issues both internally to city staff and externally to residents. The City’s willingness to pursue new initiatives is in many ways dependent on having the funds to do so. The recent economic challenges have therefore made such initiatives very hard to gather political support for.

More recently, the large budgetary shortfall has threatened the very existence of the Commission. While the Sustainability Commission costs the city relatively little (a fraction of a staff member’s weekly hours), the current budget crisis is putting virtually every city service up for consideration of cuts. This crisis makes the efficacy of the Commission an even more urgent consideration. If the Commission is retained, how can it best serve the sustainability needs of the City of Eugene? If the Commission is not maintained, what other type of organization might be used to address the advocacy of sustainability issues in Eugene?

The Oregon Leadership in Sustainability (OLIS) Certificate program at the University of Oregon has organized a team of graduate students to address the above issues and concerns. These students, under the supervision and guidance of City of Eugene staff, will research and recommend potential actions.

**Specifically, the OLIS team will explore how well the current Sustainability Commission fulfills its stated purpose, alternative models for accomplishing that purpose, and potential expansions of the purpose .**

## **Statement of Purpose and Remaining Deficiencies**

Our decision issue pertains to whether or not the current structure and/or function of the Eugene Sustainability Commission should be altered. If so, we will propose alternatives to the current model of the Commission.

## **Methods**

In order to gain insight on the effectiveness of the Sustainability Commission, the OLIS team has arranged interviews with individuals associated with the

Commission and other stakeholders with relevant perspectives. The purpose of these interviews is to provide the OLIS team with perspectives from individuals who understand the structure of the Commission.

While interviews with City of Eugene officials will provide the team with insight into how well the current Sustainability Commission fulfills its stated purpose, the OLIS students will explore alternative models that may work better for accomplishing that purpose. The team will interview individuals from other jurisdictions in Oregon, including Corvallis. The findings that result from this fieldwork will enable the team to consider the effectiveness of alternative models that are being used. In addition to interviewing representatives from other jurisdictions, the team will conduct interviews with the University of Oregon Sustainability Center and Student Sustainability Coalition. The purpose of these interviews will be to gain insight into the effectiveness of the model currently being implemented by university-run programs.

In order to attain broader knowledge and perspective into the topic, the team conducted research on other U.S cities with similar sustainability frameworks within their local government. Cities that the team has identified include:

- Sunnyvale, CA
- Bloomington, IN
- Carbondale, IL
- Little Rock, AR
- Portland, OR

When conducting research on these models, the team looked for the following factors:

- Purpose/mission
- How the commission is structured and manifested within the city
- Frequency of meetings for the commission as a whole
- Community partners
- Recent and ongoing projects/initiatives

Conducting research on models used by different cities revealed variations between them and the City of Eugene Sustainability Commission. Furthermore, this research enabled the team to consider whether the purpose of the Commission should be expanded. Gaining insight and perspectives from other jurisdictions enabled the OLIS students to determine whether or not these models may be appropriated to meet the sustainability needs of the City of Eugene. Through comparing these models with the current structure of the Eugene Sustainability Commission, the team gained an understanding of areas where the Commission is strong, and where it may benefit from improvement and expansion.

## Study Approach

### Study Questions:

1. How does the existing structure and manifestation of the Sustainability Commission support the Mission Statement?
  - The team sought interviews with members of the Eugene City Council, and Sustainability Commission in order to gain insight on the existing structure and manifestation, and how well they support the mission statement.
  - The team attended several commission meetings in order to gain a firsthand perspective on any ongoing projects and initiatives that the commission is taking on.
2. How effective are alternative models from other jurisdictions at supporting short-and long-term environmental, social and economic well being in their communities?
  - The team interviewed individuals associated with other sustainability groups in Oregon.
  - The team investigated the structures and initiatives of sustainability commissions in the cities of Sunnyvale, CA; Bloomington, IN; Carbondale, IL; Little Rock, AR; and Portland, OR.
3. Does the community of Eugene have deeper sustainability needs that would be better served by an organization with a broader or different focus and/or structure?
  - When conducting research on sustainability commissions in other jurisdictions, the OLIS team determined if there were any specific areas where sustainability needs are being unmet by the City of Eugene.
  - The team considered whether any of the proposed alternative models appear to better meet these needs in their respective communities.
  - The team determined whether or not different aspects of these models may be appropriated to fit the sustainability needs of the City of Eugene.
4. What are the benefits of changing the current structure/function of the Sustainability Commission as opposed to, or in addition to creating a new organization to support the overall mission in a different capacity?
  - This step required the team to review different factors that are working for alternative models, and compare and contrast these approaches to the Eugene model.
  - The team gathered examples of government-run sustainability commissions and coalitions or other similar organizations within the city. The students conducted research on the sustainability initiatives at the University of Oregon. The university provided a small-scale example of this approach, as the Office of Sustainability and Student Sustainability Coalition work from

different angles to fulfill campus-wide sustainability needs.

The following section will cover the findings from the research proposed throughout the introduction. When describing the findings, close attention will be given to the interview processes with key stakeholders. We will summarize research on commissions from the cities of Sunnyvale, CA; Bloomington, IN; Carbondale, IL; Little Rock, AR; and Portland, OR. We will provide analyses of interviews with stakeholders and information collected from the sustainability initiatives in the five jurisdictions mentioned above. Based on the analyses, the next section will cover potential areas where it may be beneficial for the Eugene Commission to expand its purpose. This section will touch on which approaches may or may not work for the Eugene Sustainability Commission, and the City of Eugene as a whole. The final section will contain recommendations and considerations for the Eugene Sustainability Commission.

## FINDINGS

For the Community Voice on Sustainability project, which evaluates the efficacy of the Sustainability Commission of the City of Eugene, the OLIS team sought to answer our primary research question through four study questions.

1. Does the community of Eugene have deeper sustainability needs that would be better served by an organization with a broader or different focus and/or structure?
2. How does the existing structure and manifestation of the Sustainability Commission support the Mission Statement?
3. How effective are alternative models from other jurisdictions at supporting short- and long-term environmental, social and economic well being in their communities?
4. What are the benefits of changing the current structure of the Sustainability Commission as opposed to, or in addition to creating a new organization to support the overall mission in a different capacity?

The OLIS team used interviews, internet research, field research, and a literature review, to evaluate these questions.

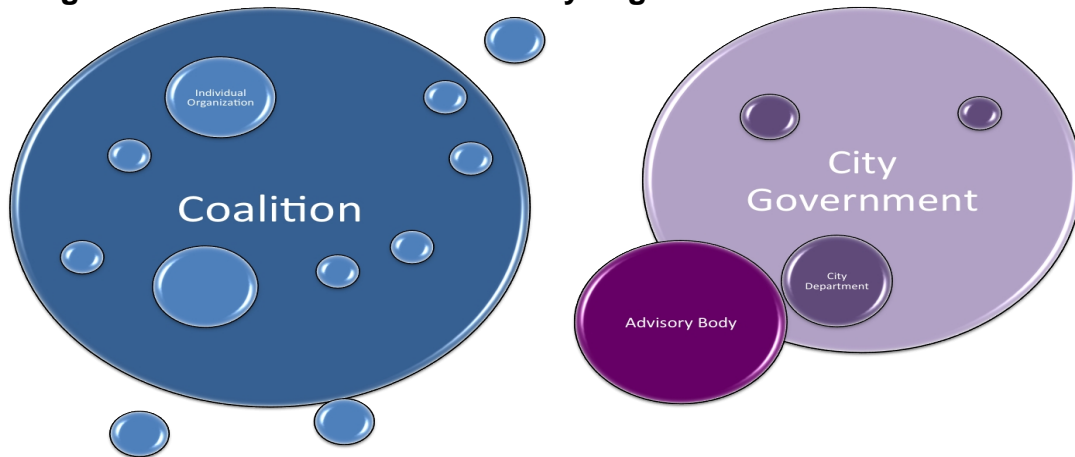
### **Does the community of Eugene have deeper sustainability needs that would be better served by an organization with a broader or different focus and/or structure?**

#### **A framework for sustainability organizations**

Early interviews suggested a framework of four different types of sustainability organizations ranging from internal to external (see Image 1). At the most internal, the Office of Sustainability takes direct action on behalf of the City to develop and enact sustainable practices and programs. At the interface of the City and the community, the Sustainability Commission serves as an advisory body to the City. Because it is directly supported by the City (through ordinance, acknowledgement and limited resources of space and staff) the Commission lacks the authority to act in opposition to the City. Within the realm of the community, two broad types of organizations can exist. Many individual organizations focus either exclusively on some aspect of sustainability, or which have sustainability as one of their values. These organizations are at the most external end of the spectrum. Between individual organizations and the advisory body, there can be a fourth type of organization - the coalition. This type of organization serves to coordinate individual organizations in order to facilitate collaboration, to minimize redundant efforts, and to provide a forum for sharing information.



**Image 1. Framework for Sustainability Organizations**



Source: OLIS team

## **Types of organizations in Eugene**

The City of Eugene has an internal Office of Sustainability, the Sustainability Commission as an advisory body, and individual organizations. It also has coalitions, but these coalitions focus on particular aspects of sustainability, such as transportation or neighborhood cohesion, rather than serving as a broad coalition for sustainability in general. To explore whether a broad coalition of this kind would serve an important need in Eugene, we looked at examples in other cities. Two examples of such coalitions are the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition and Sustainable Seattle. We focused on Corvallis for its similarity in size and location to Eugene, though it is certainly not a perfect match.

## **Summary of the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition**

The Corvallis Sustainability Coalition describes itself as “a network of more than 250 businesses, non-profits, faith communities, educational institutions and local governments and individuals in Corvallis, Oregon, brought together to accelerate progress toward a sustainable community” ([sustainablecorvallis.org](http://sustainablecorvallis.org)). Formed in 2007, the Coalition is an entirely volunteer-based organization, although it is currently considering grants and other funding opportunities to support staff positions. Operating expenses currently come from sponsorships by organizational partners - primarily local businesses with a sustainability focus. The coalition is led by a steering committee with an executive committee, a director and three operating committees. This leadership focuses on the day-to-day needs of the organization. At least one position within the leadership group is essentially a full-time, unpaid position.

Additionally, the Coalition consists of twelve action teams. Each team focuses on a different aspect of sustainability, but draws its members from the Coalition at large. The twelve action teams are:

- Community Inclusion,
- Economic Vitality,
- Education,
- Energy,
- Food,
- Health and Human Services,
- Housing,
- Land Use,
- Natural Areas,
- Transportation,
- Waste Prevention, and
- Water.

These action teams coordinate projects and activities around their theme. This provides members with opportunities to work on specific projects of interest, and develop leadership skills. While the Coalition is independent of the City of Corvallis, it does submit an annual report to City Council, and a City Councilor serves as a formal liaison. Subjectively, one of the most impressive elements of the Coalition that the team noticed during field research was the energy in the group. There was a great deal of enthusiasm and activity, and the meeting that we attended showcased a wide variety of projects.

### **Interview responses about the need for a coalition**

When asked about the potential role of a coalition in Eugene, interviewees had mixed responses. Some were very enthusiastic about the idea. This view tended to be accompanied by an expressed desire for more direct action and coordination, as opposed to the strictly advisory capacity of the Commission. Other interviewees suggested that such a coalition has certain inherent challenges. For example, a coalition gets its authority and energy by being independent. It would therefore be counter-productive for such an organization to be formed under the influence of the City of Eugene. The two other ways such a coalition could be formed are 1) through the efforts of a private organization such as a non-profit, or 2) as a volunteer, grassroots organization. The first option has some of the same limitations as the City. An existing organization has existing relationships, historic focuses and partnerships, and funding that is likely accompanied by expectations. These factors limit the independence, or at least the perception of independence (which is just as important) of such a coalition. In order to be most effective, therefore, a broad sustainability-focused coalition should be community-based and have the single purpose of serving as a coalition. But does Eugene need a coalition like this in the first place? One interviewee said no. If there was a need, the community would fill it.

### **Conclusion**

So, does the community of Eugene have deeper sustainability needs that would be better served by an organization with a broader or different focus/structure? Of the structures that we have found precedent for (internal office, advisory body, coalition, and individual issue groups) the only one not present in Eugene is a broad sustainability coalition. Based on our

understanding of what such a coalition entails, we feel that it would serve fundamentally different needs than those currently served by the Sustainability Commission (see below). While such an organization would certainly add value to the mix of sustainability-focused organizations in Eugene, it would need to be created independently in order to be effective, and would also require tremendous effort and commitment on the part of a core group of volunteers. In the political climate of Eugene, it would also be vital that this core group consist of individuals who have or could develop the trust and respect of a wide range of stakeholders.

### **How does the existing structure and manifestation of the Sustainability Commission support the Mission Statement? (history, current guidelines/rules, evaluation)**

**History:** Mayor Piercy ran on a sustainability platform against advice of friends/supporters. She is very liberal and considers all legs of sustainability. She sees her platform as a tool to bring the community together. The Sustainable Business Initiative came about as a way to bring business interests on board with the sustainability platform. Mayor Piercy asked for recommendations as to how the City could support and encourage the growth of more sustainable practices. She received 22 recommendations, including the Sustainability Commission itself and the sustainability liaison position. Many sustainability interests developed from this framework. The commission takes its job very seriously, and is different from any other city commission. It is politically uncontroversial in terms of its representation.

#### **Current guidelines:**

The current mission statement for the Sustainability Commission reads “The Sustainability Commission works to create a healthy community now and in the future by proposing measurable solutions to pressing environmental, social, and economic concerns to the City of Eugene, its partners, and its people.”

In terms of the current structure of the commission, the environmental aspect of sustainability is given the strongest focus because it works to serve a need that is not met by other city commissions. One interviewee suggested that it is beneficial for the commission to place a strong focus on environmental sustainability, rather than dividing the focus evenly among each of the three aspects mentioned. If the Sustainability Commission were to place a strong emphasis on the social aspect of sustainability, its work may overlap with that of the Human Rights Commission. Another stakeholder mentioned that suggestions typically are not as measurable as the mission suggests, and that the commission lacks the expertise to do serious social or economic analysis. Furthermore, this individual brought up the difficulties of collaborating with other commissions, such as the Human Rights Commission.

In terms of structure, the commission is divided into sub-committees and ad hoc committees, which focus in on more specific topics. The following sub-committees were in place as of FY2013:

- Triple Bottom Line
- Transportation System Plan, and Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan

- Sustainable Business Practices
- Carbon Fee
- Regional Collaboration and Planning for Climate Change
- 20-Minute Neighborhoods
- Internal Climate Action Plan
- EmX
- Sustainable Energy Policy
- Food Policy (ad hoc)

In terms of implementation, the Transportation Systems Plan/Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and the Internal Climate Action Plan provide work products that propose plans focused on creating and sustaining a healthy community.

### **Evaluation:**

While the overall role of the commission is to act as an advisory board to the City Council, it has struggled in having its ideas reviewed and implemented by Council. When asked about how well the Sustainability Commission accomplishes its mission, many interviewees responded by stating that the commission itself develops strong ideas that are necessary to achieve the mission, but is often held back by City Council. An example of the barrier that exists between the Commission and the Council is the food memo, which was written by the Commission in May 2012. The Council did not review the memo until nearly 18 months after it was written. Another example is when the Commission's request for Council to hold a work session and adopt a carbon fee resolution was not granted by the City Manager.

One stakeholder suggested that finding a better approach to working with City Council might help the commission to more effectively accomplish its mission. Another interviewee commented on the role that the City Manager plays in dictating the relationship that the Commission has with the City Council. It has been suggested that the Commission should work on strengthening its relationship with the City Manager in order to alleviate some of these barriers and become a more effective advisory board.

## **How effective are alternative models from other jurisdictions at supporting short- and long-term environmental, social and economic well being in their communities?**

### **Overview of alternative models**

In our review of alternative models, we looked at sustainability-focused advisory bodies in other cities, coalitions, and the university system as an analogy. The coalition model is discussed in detail earlier in this chapter through the specific example of the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition. The university system and a variety of city advisory bodies are discussed below.

We found that the University of Oregon (UO) system mirrored the municipality system of having four types of sustainability organizations. UO has an Office of Sustainability, an advisory body (the Environmental Issues Committee), a coalition (the Student Sustainability Coalition), and individual student groups that represent the "community" of the university. Because

faculty and staff are employed by the university, they do not have the independence of voicing their opinion that students have. We particularly looked at the relationship between the Office of Sustainability and the UO Student Sustainability Coalition. The UO Office of Sustainability is much like the Office of Sustainability for the City of Eugene. It is an official part of the organization, engaged in projects, partnerships and advocacy. The Student Sustainability Coalition is separate, acting more like a citizen group, taking independent action and advocating for change from the official organization. There is also an advisory board, which is most similar to the Sustainability Commission. The Environmental Issues Committee advises the University and the Office of Sustainability, but with a narrower focus than the Sustainability Commission has in Eugene.

Widening our net a bit, we looked at other sustainability commissions in the US (see Table 1). Sunnyvale, CA (population 140,081) has a seven-member Sustainability Commission that serves as an advisory body to the City Council. This body focuses on the goals of the Climate Action Plan and the General Plan. Specific duties include:

- Advise Council on policy issues addressing sustainability goals.
- Advise Council on how to strategically accelerate Sunnyvale's progress towards sustainability and recommend priorities, in order to promote continued regional leadership in sustainability.
- Periodically review policies governing specific practices, such as greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction, water conservation, renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste reduction, and urban forestry. Illustrative examples include creation of infrastructure for low emission vehicles, habitat restoration and conservation, biodiversity preservation, and reduction of toxics in the waste stream.
- Advise Council on ways to drive community awareness, education, and participation in best practices.
- Review and make recommendations to Council on Federal, State and regional policies related to sustainability which impact Council's goals and policies. (City of Sunnyvale Website)

Bloomington, IN (population 81,963) has a Commission on Sustainability that "promotes economic development, environmental health, and social equity in our community for present and future generations. The commission gathers and disseminates information; promotes practical initiatives; and measures, monitors, and reports on our community's progress toward sustainability." Half of its twelve members are appointed by the mayor, and half by city council. (City of Bloomington Website)

Carbondale, IL (population 26,241) has a 9-member Sustainability Commission, entirely appointed by the mayor, with very specific (largely energy-related) duties. According to their website "The Sustainability Commission shall advise the City Council concerning the following matters: A) Recommendations for energy conservation provisions in the Building Code; B) Study of possible incentives and financing methods of energy conservation and the use of renewable energy sources such as solar energy; C) Application of energy and environmental conservation principles within all facets of the City; D) Increase energy efficiency in transportation; E) Facilitation of inter-agency exchange of information, findings, and expertise

in the field of energy conservation and environmental issues; F) Recycling and the use of recycled or reusable materials.” (City of Carbondale Website)

Little Rock, AR (population 193,524) has the Mayor’s Sustainability Commission, which makes recommendations to the city and organized a Sustainability Summit with invited experts. The 16 member commission has a strong environmental focus, but little public clarity as to who it makes recommendations to, how members are appointed, or what the limits of their scope are. (City of Little Rock Website)

Portland, OR (population 603,106) has conflated their Planning and Sustainability Commissions (along with the Planning and Sustainability Departments) in an effort to incorporate sustainability concerns into planning decisions at all levels. This model relies on a fundamental structural difference from the City of Eugene that the OLIS team feels is incompatible with the current situation.

In summary, the five alternative Sustainability Commissions are outlined in the table below. Several cities did not make their appointment strategies public, so those are not included in the data.

**Table 1. Alternative Sustainability Commissions**

City	Number of Members	Appointment Strategy	Year Formed	Advisory Focus	Sustainability Focus
Sunnyvale, CA	7	-	2011	City Council	CAP Goals
Bloomington, IN	12	6 by Mayor 6 by City Council	2005	City Council and City Administration	Triple Bottom Line
Carbondale, IL	9	all by Mayor	2009	City Council	Energy
Little Rock, AR	16	-	2008	the city	Environment
Portland, OR	11	-	2010	City Council	Land Use Planning

Source: City Websites

## Conclusion

Each advisory body was created out of the specific culture of its jurisdiction. The key takeaway from examining these different commissions was that the particular variations (number of members, method of appointment, advisory focus, or sustainability focus) had little to do with how well the commission functioned. The more important variable seemed to be the relationships between the commission and the city government. Because we lack local **details about those relationships, we primarily inferred them from the posted** information about the commissions. The sustainability focus did seem to limit some commissions, but others produced documents outside of the stated focus. No commission that we looked at had as broad of a mission or goals as Eugene’s Sustainability Commission.

## **What are the benefits of changing the current structure of the Sustainability Commission as opposed to, or in addition to creating a new organization to support the overall mission in a different capacity?**

### **On changing the structure and function of the Sustainability Commission:**

A portion of our project has focused on the possibility of changing the overall structure and function of the Sustainability Commission. As mentioned in the first section, early interviews suggest a framework that incorporates four different structures for an organization, ranging from internal to external. When interviewing stakeholders, we asked questions pertaining to what is currently working for the commission, and where there is need for change or improvement. Below are suggestions made by stakeholders regarding structural changes that may benefit the commission as a whole.

- Several interviewees brought attention to the potential benefit of strengthening the liaison system that the commission currently has in place. These stakeholders mentioned that in their opinions, the current liaison system is not very effective. Strengthening the liaison system may help to better define the roles and objectives of subcommittees. Having subcommittees that are better defined and more focused will enable the commission to foster strong, sustainable partnerships with other organizations and agencies in the community.
- Many stakeholders brought attention to the benefits of collaborating with community organizations, businesses, and other governmental agencies in addition to having liaisons. Project- or event-based partnerships can provide opportunities to build relationships and common ground with other sustainability-focused groups.
- Another stakeholder brought attention to the possibility of using non-commission members to bolster the subcommittees. Using resources that are not directly tied to the commission may increase its leverage by engaging more people.
- Several stakeholders mentioned the potential benefit of having a clearer internal document. This document should state the function of the commission, how it will operate, and specific actions that it will take. The document should mention any individual organizations that the Commission thinks it would be beneficial to reach out to.
- A common issue that interviewees pointed to was the tension that is often arises as a result of differing personalities and interests within the Commission. Having an internal document that defines Commission roles more clearly may help to alleviate some of these tensions and form more cohesion within the group.

### **On creating a new organization to support the mission in a different capacity:**

When looking at what is working for the Sustainability Commission and what may be altered, we looked into the possibility of creating a new organization to serve the sustainability needs of Eugene. As a result of our findings, the only alternative model that our research suggested would be viable is that of a coalition. As stated in the first section, we focused most of our research on

the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition. Since Corvallis and Eugene share similar characteristics in terms of size and geographic location, we found it beneficial to research and observe their coalition model in practice. When determining whether or not it would be beneficial for the City of Eugene to create a new organization to support sustainability efforts altogether, the following points were taken into consideration:

- When looking at outside organizations, such as the model of the Corvallis Coalition, it is important to look at the unique political situation of Eugene (for more information on the Corvallis Coalition see page 10).
- One stakeholder brought up the point that if a coalition were to be formed, it should exist outside of the formal City structure.
- Another stakeholder mentioned that staff support would be inappropriate for a coalition, and that the City or city departments could potentially be partners in the coalition.
- Another stakeholder brought up that an existing nonprofit would probably be the only organization with the capacity to develop a new model.
- Stakeholders brought up many aspects of the current Commission that they found are working well. Several common points that interviewees brought up include:
  - The diverse backgrounds and expertise of members enables policies to be viewed from a variety of perspectives.
  - Members provide a strong base of knowledge that would be expensive for the City to access in other ways.
  - The Commission has had success with bringing together broad issues of sustainability and providing energy around proposing solutions. They have collectively put a lot of work into the Triple Bottom Line tool.
  - In general, the Commission acts as a civil and inclusive body despite differences in opinion.

Since we found that there are aspects of the Commission that are currently working well, we concluded that it would not be beneficial or necessary for the City of Eugene to create a new organization altogether. While having an outside organization such as the Corvallis Coalition may work effectively in certain cities, this structure may not fit well within the political culture of Eugene.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research presented above, the OLIS team has developed the following recommendations for the Sustainability Commission.

### Increase Clarity of Role

One of our primary recommendations is that the Sustainability Commission engage in an internal visioning exercise. Our research revealed a lack of clarity and agreement around the purpose and role of the Commission. We believe that the visioning exercise should consider the Commission's role as an advisory body to be its primary purpose, in as much as no other organization can serve in that capacity. Primary outcomes of this exercise should include:

- Guidelines for how the Commission can most effectively act as an advisory body (types of products, interactions, and relationships that are strategic or have served well in the past)
- Guidelines for individual members to help focus activities and set realistic expectations for incoming commissioners
- Additional avenues of action for the Commission that support the overall mission.

### Think Politically

The Sustainability Commission is in a unique position within the community of Eugene. The OLIS team's research indicates that the current focus of the Commission is the development of recommendations for the City Manager and City Council. While this is an important function of the Commission, we would argue that an even more important function is the delivery of those recommendations.

Good recommendations alone are rarely sufficient to generate change. Very few people are receptive to an outside entity telling them what the "right thing to do" is. In order to be effective, recommendations must be accompanied by political pressure. That pressure can be in the form of large scale community presence, key stakeholder influence, or side benefits (e.g. we want you to do this because it is sustainable, but you want to do it because it saves you money). Standing relationships with the Commission or individual commissioners can be a great foundation for this kind of influence.

Another political consideration is the community itself. Eugene has a wide spectrum of political views, and people at any point along the spectrum tend to be strongly opinionated and vocal. In this environment, consensus is extremely challenging to build. The Commission should be extremely selective in choosing issues that merit broad community consensus, because it takes so much energy.

Eugene's political climate is also cause for caution when trying to apply alternative models or strategies. Scientific and technical solutions are generally applicable across geographies, but the value-driven, adaptive challenges of enacting sustainability in the political realm are much harder to

transfer. For example, the Corvallis model seems to work extremely well...in Corvallis. Whether such a model would be as effective in Eugene is a question of considerable debate.

## Increase Capacity

As a thirteen-member volunteer body, the Sustainability Commission has limited capacity. The OLIS team recommends several strategies to increase that capacity.

- **The liaison system** - The Commission is already working to make liaison positions clearer and more effective. We recommend continuing this work, and seeking opportunities to partner with other organizations on projects as a means of strengthening relationships.
- **Alumni relations** - Maintain contact with former members of the Commission. These individuals can serve as a resource on many levels, and have already shown a commitment to the group. Periodic updates and requested input at meetings would provide opportunities for engagement at a lower time commitment level.
- **Subcommittees** - Look into the possibility of inviting non-committee members to serve on subcommittees. There may be City regulations that prevent it, but if it is possible, the OLIS team sees this as a primary opportunity to engage additional expertise and to increase the visibility of the Commission.

## Complement Existing Structures

The mission of the Sustainability Commission covers all aspects of sustainability. While it is important that the Commission have the scope to engage with any aspect of sustainability, it is also important that it not be responsible for all aspects of sustainability. Sustainability covers far too much ground for one commission to manage effectively. Other organizations (citizen groups, private organizations, other commissions, and city departments) make significant contributions to the work of sustainability, and should be acknowledged.

The Sustainability Commission has the ability to look at the full range of sustainability issues, and focus attention on those that are under-addressed or of special importance. In situations where issues exist that are not addressed by other organizations, the Commission can provide needed focus. In situations where another organization is putting effort toward an issue that the Commission deems urgent, the Commission can take on a supportive role to bolster those efforts. This approach will help to mitigate capacity issues and provide focus for the group.

## Additional Considerations

Through the course of our research, many suggestions were made that we did not include in our final recommendations. Two suggestions were made with enough frequency that the OLIS team felt it appropriate to address them separately.

## **Funding**

Several sources suggested funding as a means of empowering the Sustainability Commission. While it is possible that this would create a more dynamic organization, it would also change the group in fundamental ways that merit caution.

- Funding would add numerous responsibilities to the group, which would detract from its advisory capacity.
- The specifics of funding could include 1) the pursual of grants for City projects, 2) requests for funding for Commission projects, or 3) Commission control of funding for community project. Each of these options have different political implications and logistic requirements.
- Beyond the logistics of how funding would change the Commission, interviews indicate that there is insufficient political support for such a change to be realistic.

## **Shift to a Coalition Model**

Because of its close proximity and high energy, replicating the coalition model exemplified in Corvallis was a common suggestion. We discuss the benefits and costs of such a model in the chapter on Findings, but want to focus here on the limitations of such an organization. The primary value of the Commission as it stands over the coalition model is its formal capacity to advise the City. The activities of a coalition, while valuable and appealing to many, do not address this function. Replacing the Sustainability Commission with a coalition would leave more of a gap than currently exists with the absence of such a coalition.

## CONCLUSIONS

The OLIS team believes that the Sustainability Commission provides a unique service to the City of Eugene that could not be provided as well by any other type of organization. The core services of the Commission are the development and delivery of recommendations to the City. Evaluation of those functions has suggested certain areas where the Commission could act more strategically.

The OLIS team recommends that the Commission create documents that clarify its role and purpose. As an advisory body to a politically diverse city, the Commission should consider the strategic delivery of its recommendations. The Commission has a number of opportunities to creatively expand its capacity by reaching out to the community. Given the many organizations working towards sustainability in some capacity in Eugene, we suggest that the Commission can increase its impact by focusing on under-addressed issues.

By acting more strategically, the Commission can increase its impact on the City and community of Eugene. These strategies can provide increased focus, energy and visibility to help move Eugene towards a more comprehensive path to sustainability.

## APPENDIX A - INTERVIEW FINDINGS

The OLIS team conducted interviews via phone and in person of 6 current and former commissioners, no city council members, the City Manager, Mayor, 2 current and former staff members, and four representatives of alternative models. Interview requests were sent out to 14 current and former commissioners, 8 city council members, the City Manager, Mayor, 3 current and former staff members, and five representatives of alternative models. The questions that were asked are displayed below with consolidated answers. Answers are presented without attribution to ensure anonymity of the sources.

**History of commission** - Mayor ran on a sustainability platform against advice of friends/supporters. She is very liberal and cares about all legs of sustainability. Sees platform as a tool to bring community together. Everyone cares about sustainability they just call it different things. The sustainable business initiative was a way to bring business interests on board and not be threatened by the platform of sustainability. Comes from a human services background and felt that the city hadn't come to terms with the full scope of sustainability. She asked for recommendations as to how the city could support and encourage the growth of more sustainable practices. 22 recommendations, including sustainability commission and Babe's job. Many sustainability interests came out of this framework. The commission takes its job very seriously. It is different from any other commission. And it uncontroversial politically because of representation.

### 1. How do you see the Sustainability Commission serving Eugene?

Pretty critical. As a volunteer appointed commission that serves a unique role in reaching out to the community. Evaluating issues and bringing it to advisories and council.

Important for gathering information, coming up with ideas to make the city more sustainable. And that the staff is important for making sure the city follows up.

Charged with making policy recommendations to the council as well as mitigation and assessment.

By gathering information and creating ideas that are policy focused and serve as a means of accountability. Also serve as support for city staff.

It has the opportunity to inform the community. They serve by focusing on environmental issues, but they aren't perceived as dealing with social or economic sustainability issues.

As a conscience to help address the tendency to focus on short term issues, rather than long term ones.

It is a stakeholder group of diverse people who are very intelligent and informed, and who advise city council and city manager on policy. It's hard to evaluate an advisory group because it is very hard to attribute success to their initiatives. (The possibility of giving them a small fund would increase

their authority, influence, and visibility.)

Believe it gives a strong perspective that people don't always think about.

They digest sustainability related issues and provide advice to city council. They look at complicated issues that the council wouldn't have time for. The commission is responsive to what they think are the most pressing issues and bring issues forward from the public.

Serves the city to the degree that it is accepted. Council is not as committed as the commission. But the council has appointed commissioners well. **The council is challenged by much of the advice from the commission.**

It is an advisory group on broad issues. My experience has included less interaction that I expected going in.

## **2. Why did you join?**

Just moved to Eugene in January. Appointed in March. Has a long term interest in community involvement. Became interested because of ad in paper where City Council was looking for residents to serve on boards and commissions. And also interested because he is an environmental scientist and has been involved as a volunteer with many environmental organizations. Interested in air quality issues, sustainability issues and climate change. And served on an environmental advisory board.

Working on sustainability related issues on neighborhood associations. Helped with food policy, local politics and ecology. Comes from biggest neighborhood with least representation. And appointed by councilor from connection with neighborhood association.

Climate change. And appointed by councilor, applied when first formed.

From a neighborhood focus, food focus, having worked with the urban farm, had a background in ecology, and the neighborhood having a lack of representation.

Had a strong interest in sustainability, but with a narrow focus on transportation. Wanted to work within a broader context, and be able to include more values, educational opportunities, and the social influence of the commission.

In order to attract volunteers, give them a valuable role, give them a legacy, and opportunities that they won't otherwise have. Popular boards include: FFLC, EWEB, and BRING. Consider the difference between a commission and a board. An annual report serves as one alternative to a legacy. Also want to know that logistics will be taken care of. They want the occasional perk.

Passionate about issue. And feel it is a growing opportunity. Value the importance of community service and the impact we can have at a local level.

People who join already see sustainability as an urgent issue. And hope to influence better practices in the city.

One of the few formally sanctioned bodies in the city that addresses sustainability issues. Also, one of the few ways people feel that they can contribute.

Accepted in first iteration. Original appointee. Retired, had time, was bio faculty with environmental interest. Felt need to do something about climate change.

Personal reasons like background in planning and transportation, a way to expand past the limitations of work, and to make the city a better place

### **3. What does the Commission do well?**

New to commission, no historic sense of what done well. But bringing key issues to council - specifically food policy and making sure that the area of sustainability is central to city decision making.

Different members with different backgrounds and expertise. Considering different policies from different perspectives. Good at doing research and footwork. Usually able to agree on most issues despite differences.

Give quality advice to council.

Able to critique plans before council sees them. Spend an average of 5-20 hours a month. Babe is awesome.

In the past, they have given good policy recommendations, but now they need to focus on the community, which is harder work.

Has a tremendous base of knowledge that would be very expensive for the city to access in other ways.

Tracking what is happening in the community. And communicating the issues. People are appointing commissioners who are aware of the issues.

They have worked hard on the TBL tool which serves as a platform for how we think about things, and which we try to embed in the fabric of the community.

The SC gives extra leverage to issues.

Very robust discussion, inclusive, thoughtful, diligent. Respectful of each other and the public (few exceptions).

Works as a deliberative body. Civil, though not necessarily on same page. Willing to work with others, be cooperative.

The commission brings together broad perspectives on sustainability and **can potentially provide energy around solutions.**

The commission originally had major advantages in terms of recommendations that had a lot of work already put into them, both in terms of development and political will.

### **4. What are some of its challenges?**

One concern is policy makers forgetting the importance of sustainability in decision making (maybe).

Sustainability is huge overarching topic. Difficult to show hard nuts and bolts info. Can be hard to make the case of importance and decide what to focus on. The frustration of working on a project and not having it reviewed by council. And then roadblocks and frustrations at public forum meetings.

Don't necessarily help the council to take their advice.

Hard to get an audience. Requires a lot of nagging. They haven't been able to find a venue to defend the commission due to misunderstanding of public forums.

Identifying relationships with other sustainability organizations that have overlap. They are challenged also by having ideas without resources to back them up, and without considering limited resources of the city.

Actual impact is lacking. There is a balance between big picture new initiatives, and current concerns of the council. Better awareness of the council docket would help. Personal capacity is a challenge, and the balance between the passions between individual commissioners versus objectively pressing issues. The sustainability commission's weight might matter more if they were more strategic with their interventions. The limitation as an advisory body provides a lack of clarity around action opportunities. There are value tensions between the commission and staff. Council has expressed that they only want advice that they will follow. Suggestion: they need a champion on the council. Jurisdictional partners and credibility are an issue.

Liaison roles don't work as well as they could. Feel unheard by city council. Reports don't get looked at carefully. Written communication and testifying engaging with other groups in community, and have a lot of work to do. What are commissioners committing to? Need to feel effective and efficient.

It's hard to measure the influence of an advisory body and therefore justify existence and attract talent. The success of the commission depends on the effectiveness of individual members. Networking opportunities, access to influential people, having direction (report?) and guaranteed logistical support help.

The diverse membership leads to struggles with what issues to focus on. Some members are frustrated and anxious to do something "big". There are a mix of "big believers" and skeptics, and ambivents. Need to think about how to convert non-believers. There are major policy issues around growth and prioritization of issues. There is so much that needs to get done, and it is hard to narrow down to urgent things. It is a lot of work, and there is uncertainty as to whether the council is listening.

Have a hard time providing right information at the right time (often too late). Hard time delivering a product. Difficulties prioritizing. And in the past they **have gotten distracted easily. A missed opportunity has been not involving other resources - members of the community, potential commissioners, previous commissioners.**

Move slowly, because members have limited time. Not good at getting message out. Don't work as well with council as they could.



Commission is not taken seriously because policy-makers are not serious about sustainability. The commission is at a crossroads. It needs well-defined goals and objectives that clarify the identity of the commission.

There are a lot of political problems with the SC because there is not universal political support. They get pushback. The commission needs to be viewed as a partner, not a lecturer. Projects where they assist with an existing priority could help build that foundation. The guidelines of the commission should have a very clear framework for advocacy so that it is not extreme or irrelevant. The commission should also avoid self-limiting, and find ways to engage the community more directly.

## **5. How well does the Commission accomplish its mission?**

Depends on whether recommendations are acted on by council.

Room for improvement. Often big projects end up stalling. Not seeing the results they would like to see. Made a goal of improving communication and advocacy for projects. Could improve on connecting with outside resources. Private organizations and other city commissions. Willamette farm and food coalition (WFFC), NEDCO, and UO. Also local business incubators (sprout).

Group of people who manage a thoughtful work plan, but the council has not felt bound to follow them seriously.

Visibility and accomplishing the mission would be aided by personal advocacy rather than passive recommendations.

Suggestions typically aren't as measurable as the mission suggests, and we lack expertise and capacity to do serious economic or social analysis, as well as overlap issues with the human rights commission. It's very hard to collaborate with other commissions.

Barriers often get in the way. We could find a way to be more effective with city council. It would help serve the mission.

They question this. Any good commission needs to question this regularly.

"B" as a grade. They chew on issues of the day and focus, but have trouble with delivery of product. It has to do with how seriously they are taken by city council. Three legs issue - focus on environmental issues, not equal, and that is right because that is where there is a gap.

Pretty well. Problem with getting recommendations accepted. Not sure if mission should include more aggressive lobbying.

I am skeptical about the current trajectory.

## **6. How appropriate is the mission of the Commission? Would you make any changes?**

Find it appropriate as it aligns with the City's policy and Envision Eugene. That it has been adopted by the City Council and the only way it should be changed is if the council wants to change Envision Eugene.

Yes appropriate.

In the past, it has been appropriate, but in the future, it is important to look at both immediate and long-term concerns (finding a balance) being proactive and reactive and resilient.

It would be better to know that they are an action-oriented group. Greening up other aspects of city gov would go along with their mission.

The council would not support the expansion of the mission, purpose/scope of commission. They are protective of their decision making role.

Not sure if all three legs of sustainability and equal focus should be a specific aim of the mission. Particularly in lieu of duplication of efforts (human rights, bike transportation, etc.)

Limitations with important, timely issues. Particularly around council subcommittee acting more quickly when want to go to representatives. Don't think it needs to be expanded. There is room to lobby councilors. Effectiveness might be increased by broadening mission to expand who we can make recs to.

The mission seems right, but there is an issue of scale and scope. Do we focus on local issues exclusively, or put energy towards more global issues?

**7. What kinds of partnerships would serve the Commission in achieving its mission? In achieving larger sustainability goals of the community? How would they help?**

When putting together the workplan, the topic came up, and he said that it will be important to reach out to NGO's, the business community and civic groups to discuss what the commission is doing. And look for some recommendations within the partnerships. This is one area where the commission can do better and that by getting partnerships they have a better understanding and capacity to build support for what they are doing in the community. Looking for opportunities to work with UO should be encouraged.

Been a push by members of the community to see what others are doing. Taking what is being done outside of the NGOs of the community. Falling into the trap of a starving government. (budget, Matt McRae should talk about savings with budget cuts). Not a city of Eugene issue alone, it requires a regional response from county commissioners. Acting at just the city level isn't appropriate. In terms of adaptation and mitigation it needs to be regional. They have worked with Lane Livability and neighborhood sustainability groups. And that it would benefit them to work with WWFC, farmers market, and changes in ordinances for local food production.

EWEB.

The idea of sub-networks around specific issues as partners to advocate to the city. Neighborhood association has potential, but is not representative of the neighborhoods. They need stronger ties to the media, and to strengthen existing partnerships rather than develop new ones.

Depends on the issue. There is always some group for any issue. It is difficult because each group has a different mission. It depends on the values of the decision makers and possible functions of a partnership needs

to be a continual discussion.

It's always good for a group to push the envelope, but it shouldn't necessarily be the city. Because it is values driven and political, it is inappropriate for the city to fund it. Also unnecessary due to small size of town.

They are good at reaching out to other organizations and committees. Such as planning, human rights. But building bridges with community groups is not easy. Springfield and Lane County don't focus on the issue the way Eugene does. The city has an ongoing relationship with the university, LCC, Eugene schools, EWEB, LTD, etc.

So many people and organizations in the community focused on particular env. Issues. But no organization working on local advocacy for climate **change (state and fed). The commission focuses on climate change and** energy issues, so a partner in that realm would be good. Many members sit on boards of advocacy groups. No lack of connection, but a problem with engagement (members don't use their connections to help advocate issues/causes).

Have tried to form a more effective partnership with planning commission. Limited success. CLUAC. Even less success with human rights commission because of non-responsiveness. At community level, originally each member was a liaison, but that was not successful. Hopes to focus on specific liaison outreach. Need more focus on partnerships. And having partnerships with other commissions is most helpful. City and regional groups focused on food issues.

We need stronger ties to the business community and the university. Sub committees do good partnering.

#### **8. Are you aware of any alternative models that you think would work well in Eugene?**

Don't know firsthand. Look at Portland and Seattle for sustainability. Best practices should be identified and see if they are applicable.

Not aware of any that may work better. But Eugene has groups working on different topics, so we might partner with the food council.

Corvallis model. Portland merged planning and sustainability because if the built environment is built on sustainability principles, it will allow for the city to be sustainable from the start. But it is important to have a way to measure the effectiveness of the model.

A community coalition such as Corvallis would make the sustainability commission redundant. City would support an alternative model as a convening place, but staff support would be inappropriate for a coalition. The city or city departments could potentially be partners in a coalition.

Have heard of some but don't know details. Suspect that an existing nonprofit would be the only organization with the capacity to develop a new model.

A coalition should not be convened by the city. If it is not self-organized, it is unnecessary. Democracy is messy.

Not aware. City manager dicatates interactions with council.

Have to think about. Planning commission is so focused on specific land use issues, so conflating would not work because both commissions have their plates full. Bpac pays attention to subset of things that the commission looks at, so possible model, but issue of effectiveness.

Not aware. But good to connect to other communities. Our model is cheap and uses educated/trained people. Good means by which members are appointed. Combination of consensus appointments and individual appointments. That assures variability of viewpoints.

Boulder, CO

**9.If you could change the Commission, what changes would you make?  
Why?**

Too new to say. More diversity on commission.

Having a meeting space for the sub-committees. And refining the subcommittees to make sure they are effective. And liaison position is vague and not working, so useful to redefine those positions.

Don't think there is a consensus between members. Don't think they all appreciate urgency of climate change.

Don't advertise the commission as dealing with all three legs of sustainability if they are only going to focus on one. We need to have broader representation of community voices.

Have everyone agree on TBL and uses. And other consensus.

Use non-commission members to bolster subcommittees. Use the resources of the community that are not directly tied to commission. Engage more people to increase lifting power. Increase responsiveness with city manager (**central but unsure of how**). Tighter feedback with policy makers.

Works well, but a possible problem is loss of expertise when members leave. Ebbs and flows. Possible applications for extended terms to maintain access to expertise. Having a stronger business representation would be good - currently lacking. Someone well respected and connected in the business community would be a plus.

Make it more project or goal focused. Funding would help. More independence might alleviate the issue of an uninterested audience.

The commission needs to clarify its purpose, roles and strategies beyond the annual workplan.

**10. Is there anything else you would like to share?**

Concern about budget cuts to the sustainability program, not so much the commission.

Commission is very important and brings value and service to the city at very low cost.

We (students) are wasting our time.

It's hard to be cohesive. It would be great to foster relationships with previous members. Feel that we have lost a lot of expertise.

Interested in diving into and hearing about other models.

Dealing with elected bodies, you need to be impatient and impatient, because not everyone has the same passion and perspective as you. Be aware of constraints with Babe as staff (can't get out too far). Biggest thing for commission is to not spread too thin.

Note that they were really effective in first year, and why did they lose that? Many vital programs are directly the result of this commission. Lots of ambitious goals, but to add more would spread the commission too thin and dilute resources. If we infused awareness an intention throughout the organization, we can use their efforts to become a cultural part of the organization - planned obsolescence. Bring up these conversations everywhere. Hold people accountable for decisions. Maybe have a more diffuse model.

Commission is on potential chopping block. Would be unwise for staff to be only sustainability presence.

### **Corvallis**

1. 12 action teams? Serves by being a catalyst to make things happen, fosters communication between groups. Hard to do both (a lot of groups don't).

2. Joined because of personal interest in the topic, and relationships to other members. Joined because of an interest in the big picture, geological time spans. A desire to take action to not be a victim of the system. Has a strong belief that individuals can change the world. Has technical experience with education, community organizing, and organizational capacity building.

3. How well does model work? Only as well as the people involved. It works well, particularly by focusing on positive action. It is challenged by a limited capacity for political action. Advocacy is challenged by the diversity of partnerships. It is also challenged by dependence on volunteers. Action team coordinators need support (leadership training, one-on-one counseling).

4. Mission is good.

5. Model itself is a secondary issue. Action teams take advantage of a tribal mindset. A core group that inspires and leads by example will draw others like a magnet. They are specifically good at providing action, as opposed to activism (lobbying). Some of the teams are strong, and some are weak depending on who is involved.

6. Was created in 2007 from 40 organizations gathered by the Natural Step focused on collaboration opportunities. Done a good job fulfilling purpose. Structured through a series of Town Hall meetings, and were able to hire a consultant through funding from the city to create an action plan. They are currently applying for grants in the hopes of hiring staff. Draw youth well. 17 action teams.

## UO

Structure: Environmental issues committee is the advisory body. The Office of Sustainability is staff, and the Student Coalition is similar to community groups. The relationship between the office and coalition is in transition and is dependent on the relationship between specific people. In the past, has been combative and mutually suspicious. With more trust, it could become collaborative. At its best, the student coalition could serve as a moral high ground, bringing attention and pressure to current issues that the office can then develop policies and practical solutions to address.

## APPENDIX B - RESEARCH FINDINGS

The first alternative model that we explored was the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition. This organization is significantly different from the Eugene Sustainability Commission. It is community based, does not advise city leadership on policy, and is organized around action teams and partnerships. While this model excels at harnessing energy and providing networking opportunities, it is not the type of organization that could be sponsored by the City of Eugene. Political autonomy is too important to this type of organization, particularly with such varied membership.

The second organization that we investigated was the University of Oregon as a microcosm of the macrocosm of Eugene. We particularly looked at the relationship between the Office of Sustainability and the UO Student Sustainability Coalition. The UO Office of Sustainability is much like the Office of Sustainability for the City of Eugene. It is an official part of the organization, engaged in projects, partnerships and advocacy. The Student Sustainability Coalition is separate, acting more like a citizen group, taking independent action and advocating for change from the official organization. There is also an advisory board, which is most similar to the Sustainability Commission. The Environmental Issues Committee advises the University and the Office of Sustainability, but with a narrower focus than the Sustainability Commission has in Eugene.

Widening our net a bit, we looked at other sustainability commissions in the US. Sunnyvale, CA has a seven-member Sustainability Commission that serves as an advisory body to the City Council. This body focuses on the goals of the Climate Action Plan and the General Plan. Specific duties include:

- Advise Council on policy issues addressing sustainability goals.
- Advise Council on how to strategically accelerate Sunnyvale's progress towards sustainability and recommend priorities, in order to promote continued regional leadership in sustainability.
- Periodically review policies governing specific practices, such as greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction, water conservation, renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste reduction, and urban forestry. Illustrative examples include creation of infrastructure for low emission vehicles, habitat restoration and conservation, biodiversity preservation, and reduction of toxics in the waste stream.
- Advise Council on ways to drive community awareness, education, and participation in best practices.
- Review and make recommendations to Council on Federal, State and regional policies related to sustainability which impact Council's goals and policies. (City of Sunnyvale Website)

Bloomington, IN has a Commission on Sustainability that “promotes economic development, environmental health, and social equity in our community for present and future generations. The commission gathers and disseminates information; promotes practical initiatives; and measures, monitors, and reports on our community's progress toward sustainability.” Half of its twelve members are appointed by the mayor, and half by city council. (City of Bloomington Website)

Carbondale, IL has a 9-member Sustainability Commission, entirely appointed by the mayor, with very specific (largely energy-related) duties. According to their website “The Sustainability Commission shall advise the City Council concerning the following matters: A) Recommendations for energy conservation provisions in the Building Code; B) Study of possible incentives and financing methods of energy conservation and the use of renewable energy sources such as solar energy; C) Application of energy and environmental conservation principles within all facets of the City; D) Increase energy efficiency in transportation; E) Facilitation of inter-agency exchange of information, findings, and expertise in the field of energy conservation and environmental issues; F) Recycling and the use of recycled or reusable materials.” (City of Carbondale Website)

Little Rock, AR has the Mayor’s Sustainability Commission, which makes recommendations to the city and organized a Sustainability Summit with invited experts. The 16 member commission has a strong environmental focus, but little public clarity as to who it makes recommendations to, how members are appointed, or what the limits of their scope are. (City of Little Rock Website)

Portland, OR has conflated their Planning and Sustainability Commissions (along with the Planning and Sustainability Departments) in an effort to incorporate sustainability concerns into planning decisions at all levels. This model relies on a fundamental structural difference from the City of Eugene that the OLIS team feels is incompatible with the current situation.

In summary, the five alternative Sustainability Commissions are outlined in the table below. Several cities did not make their appointment strategies public, so those are not included in the data.

**Table 1. Alternative Sustainability Commissions**

City	Number of Members	Appointment Strategy	Year Formed	Advisory Focus	Sustainability Focus
Sunnyvale, CA	7	-	2011	City Council	CAP Goals
Bloomington, IN	12	6 by Mayor 6 by City Council	2005	City Council and City Administration	Triple Bottom Line
Carbondale, IL	9	all by Mayor	2009	City Council	Energy
Little Rock, AR	16	-	2008	the city	Environment
Portland, OR	11	-	2010	City Council	Land Use Planning

Source: City Websites



## APPENDIX C - LITERATURE REVIEW FINDINGS

As part of our literature review, we are looking at the Growing Smart Legislative Guidebook from the American Planning Association (APA). For the purposes of our project, we will focus on the chapter that covers planning on a local level. The chapter provides an overview of why local governments plan. One of the benefits of having a local planning process is that it provides a chance to look broadly at programs a local government may initiate regarding a variety of social, economic, and environmental issues. Local planning provides a framework for consistent governmental action.

The chapter draws on local government planning as a means to enhance public participation. During the plan preparation process, citizens are given the opportunity to interact with local government officials through a series of attendant workshops, public hearings, questionnaires, and meetings.

The chapter speaks to the influential role that local governments play within state governments. State interests regarding a range of topics are directly influenced by the actions of local governments. In terms of a planning function within local government, there have been a variety of approaches. The chapter goes into detail about the Standard City Planning Enabling Act (SCPEA), Alfred Bettman's 'Model Acts,' Robert A. Walker's The Planning Function in Urban Government, and the ALI Code. Attention is brought to voluntary planning organizations including local planning commissions, advisory task forces, neighborhood planning councils, and neighborhood or community organizations. When describing the establishment of a local planning agency, the chapter draws attention to the difference between a planning agency and a planning commission. While an agency has both line and staff functions and is charged with carrying out routine activities, the commission serves as an advisory board with limited final decision-making authority.

We are looking at the ICLEI Sustainability Planning Toolkit, which gives a specific focus to developing a local sustainability plan. The toolkit is geared toward sustainability coordinators and directors within local governments. The toolkit provides a framework based on the Five Milestones of Sustainability Process. According to ICLEI, the purpose of a sustainability plan is to tie together sustainability initiatives and programs under one overarching plan, develop metrics and indicators for measuring progress, raise community awareness, develop common goals, and encourage interdepartmental coordination.

The stakeholders who should be involved in developing the sustainability plan include the sustainability team, which is comprised of the sustainability coordinator, sustainability advisory board, and an interdepartmental team. Other crucial stakeholders include external experts, the general public, and community stakeholder groups.

Before implementing this process, several pre-milestone steps must be taken into account. The toolkit suggests that a team must be organized with a designated sustainability coordinator. It is important that once the team is organized, a clear vision and purpose is defined. After defining a vision and

purpose, the team should gather ideas for scope, and develop a workplan for both the planning process and public outreach. The toolkit suggests that a team should obtain chief elected official buy-in for the plan, in addition to organizing an interdepartmental team of local government staff. In addition, the team should form a Sustainability Advisory Board and publicly announce the planning process before beginning the Five Milestones of Sustainability Process.

The first milestone is the conducting of a sustainability assessment. This step involves defining the scope of the plan, conducting an inventory on current sustainability initiatives, gathering and analyzing data for the assessment, gathering ideas from stakeholder groups, and preparing a report. After following these steps, the team should be prepared for the second milestone, which involves establishing sustainability goals. As suggested in the toolkit, the team should set clear, measurable goals that address issues identified in the sustainability assessment. The team should analyze effective strategies for achieving these goals, and begin soliciting ideas for goals from the public. After goals are set, the team should announce them to the public.

The third milestone involves the development of a local sustainability plan. At this stage, the team should prepare for the public outreach process and begin performing outreach. Measures should be developed and prioritized, and implementation plans should be proposed for each measure. If appropriate, a draft plan should be released for public comment before it is finalized. After the plan is finalized and released, the team should be prepared for the fourth milestone, which involves the implementation of policies and measures. The toolkit recommends tracking the implementation status of all measures. At this point, the planning process should be formalized, and the team should begin coordinating with a coalition of advocacy groups.

The fifth and final milestone involves evaluating progress and reporting results. As suggested in the toolkit, the team should develop an annual progress report, and report on a set of sustainability indicators. Successes should be highlighted on sustainability plan website, and the team should be kept informed on updates.

In his report *A City at Work: Report for the Barr Foundation on Boston's Green Ribbon Commission*, Dan Denison outlines the history and successes of the City of Boston's Green Ribbon Commission (GRC). The GRC is a self-organized committee of more than 30 professionals who are dedicated to supporting Boston's official climate action plan. The commission focuses on specific city goals for the years 2020 and 2050.

The GRC developed out of citywide efforts to raise awareness around the issue of climate change. In 2009, Mayor Menino established a Climate Action Leadership Committee and a Community Advisory Committee. The Climate Action Leadership Committee established a report in 2010, which outlined the City's short and long-term goals for addressing climate change. The report recommended that a commission should bring together leaders representing all segments of the community in order to help coordinate and evaluate the City's plans to address certain issues. Before the GRC emerged, the Mayor's Environmental and Energy Services Cabinet led

strong initiatives for climate change and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction. Many of the measurements that have played a crucial role for the commission emerged from these initiatives.

The Barr Foundation donated \$50 million to local efforts related to climate change in the City of Boston. This donation gave the City enough leverage to invite top professionals from the business, healthcare, real estate, and higher education sectors to join the commission. The Barr Foundation is a strong proponent for applying network theory to complex environmental issues. The GRC operates by tapping into existing networks, rather than building new ones. This method helps the commission avoid duplicating efforts. The commission is comprised of operating groups, which members partake in based on their specializations and interests. This feature of the commission enables networks to be built within each sector represented. Feedback from operating groups is necessary in order for the commission to create and implement effective policies.

Denison comments on the ways in which the GRC's efforts have appealed to the business and healthcare sectors within Boston. A recent success that has resulted from the collaborative nature of the GRC model involves Boston's healthcare system. The commission has a healthcare working group comprised of professionals in the field. Through the connections that these members have with hospitals and healthcare providers, the GRC as a whole has been able to have large impact on Boston's healthcare sector. As a result of these efforts, Boston is the first city in the United States to produce a citywide portrait of the energy use and GHG emissions of its healthcare sector.

## APPENDIX D: RESOURCES

American Planning Association. (2002). Growing Smart Legislative Guidebook: Model Statutes for Planning and the Management of Change (7). Retrieved from <http://www.planning.org/growingsmart/guidebook/print/>

Bloomington Sustainability Commission website.  
<http://bloomington.in.gov/sustainability>

Carbondale Sustainability Commission website.  
<http://explorecarbondale.com/node/60>

Denison, D. (2013). A City at Work: A Report for the Barr Foundation on Boston's Green Ribbon Commission. Barr Foundation.

Little Rock Sustainability Commission website.  
<http://littlerock.org/mayorsoffice/taskforces/lr-sustainability.aspx>

Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission website.  
<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/52999>

Sunnyvale Sustainability Commission website. <http://sunnyvale.ca.gov/CityGovernment/BoardsandCommissions/SustainabilityCommission.aspx>

Thiel, J.E. (2010). ICLEI's Sustainability Planning Toolkit and Five Milestones for Sustainability. Retrieved from [http://www.icleiusa.org/action-center/planning/Sustainability%20Five%20Milestone%20Presentation\\_5.6.10.pdf](http://www.icleiusa.org/action-center/planning/Sustainability%20Five%20Milestone%20Presentation_5.6.10.pdf)

## EUGENE SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION FY 14 WORK PLAN – ANNUAL REPORT

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July 2014

### Annual Report

Included below is a summary of the outcomes for the FY 14 work plan for the Sustainability Commission. The attached work plan matrix includes a column that captures action taken and deliverables for each major task area.

### Introduction

The FY 14 work plan for the commission reflects several continuing priorities from previous years. The commission will focus on the implementation of Envision Eugene, paying particular attention to how the seven Pillars are reflected in any outcomes or actions taken. The city budget challenges are also an important area of focus. The commission will provide input and advocacy during the development of the FY 14 budget to raise the visibility and value of city sustainability efforts and the cost-effectiveness of climate action in particular.

The link between land use and transportation planning remains an important theme this year and a number of priority work plan items are related to the development of the Transportation System Plan. Similarly, the issue of a carbon fee continues to be a priority as the state legislature completes its study of the concept later this year. The commission is also focused on championing the use of the Triple Bottom Line, implementing climate action planning and generally monitoring progress toward the significant sustainability goals City Council has adopted in the last five years.

As the commission advances the work detailed in the attached work plan, it will be important to maintain flexibility to take up new or revised priorities. Some issues, such as food policy, the new City Hall or the carbon fee concept, may take on greater significance as opportunities and needs emerge at the local, state or federal level. Other changes in priorities may be dictated by budget considerations and constraints. The commission will work with Council to adjust its course as necessary to address these emerging priorities.

In formulating this year's priorities and activities, the commission relied on several overarching goals that inform their work and define success, including:

- Promote aspects of sustainability within the three areas of the Triple Bottom Line.
- Provide relevant, timely information to City Council.
- Have more organizations within the community working on sustainability in an intentional way.
- Have a mechanism for climate adaptation/mitigation work at County and regional levels.
- Maintain alignment with commitments the City of Eugene has made around sustainability.

### Matrix

The matrix on the next page(s) includes the primary topics the commission plans to address in the coming year along with specific activities for advancing the commission's goals in these areas.

## Sustainability Commission FY 14 Work Plan

Topic	Topic description	Outcomes	Planned activities	Status in June 2014
<b>Envision Eugene</b>	Continued engagement in the implementation of Envision Eugene.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation actions are consistent with the Pillars of Envision Eugene.</li> <li>Advance climate action planning in Envision Eugene implementation.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate that pillars be strongly reflected and consistently integrated in the implementation process.</li> <li>Regular (quarterly) briefings from city planning staff. Invite CLUTAC to join briefings.</li> <li>Determine commission's role and opportunities to engage in the process.</li> <li>Review projects that are part of the implementation phase (code changes, policy or other outputs).</li> </ol>	<p>New sub-committee formed on housing density.</p> <p>Memos to City Council in support of Climate Recovery proposal contributes to implementation of climate and energy pillars in Envision Eugene.</p>
<b>Sustainable business practices</b>	Investigate and develop a Commission report around how current City policy encourages or discourages sustainable practices within private businesses. Recommend changes in City policy that will encourage sustainable business practices.	Complete and submit to staff and council a report and recommendations about how to improve policy support for green business practices.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vet findings from FY 13 research and interviews with city staff.</li> <li>Craft report and recommendations.</li> <li>Explore opportunities for partnership with GreenLane, Chamber and others for implementing recommendations.</li> </ol>	January 13 memo delivered to City Manager and City Council.
<b>Transportation System Plan (TSP) and Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plan (PBMP)</b>	Participate in development and adoption of TSP and implementation of PBMP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TSP is designed to meet fossil fuel reduction goal.</li> <li>Projects in the PBMP are implemented and get a mode shift toward active transportation.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional coordination               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore how best to fulfill the need for a regional transportation approach to transportation planning, perhaps a new regional committee or the repurposing of an existing committee.</li> <li>Review and participate in Scenario Planning project – bring forward ideas from project manager for commission input. Recommend transportation policies to be analyzed.</li> </ol> </li> <li>Eugene TSP               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay involved in the formulation of the TSP, through members serving in the TCRG, and through other opportunities to participate and monitor the formulation process and outcome.</li> <li>Stay informed through staff overview/timeline.</li> </ol> </li> <li>CLUTAC review of TSP transportation project evaluation               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update CLUTAC members and develop work plan</li> </ol> </li> <li>Develop and support a “Complete Streets”</li> </ol>	<p>Continuing involvement with the TSP. Gathering information on Complete Streets Policy.</p> <p>Testimony to Lane ACT in support of alternative transportation projects.</p>

# Sustainability Commission FY 14 Work Plan

Topic	Topic description	Outcomes	Planned activities	Status in June 2014
			<p>policy for the City of Eugene. Such a policy would acknowledge that all road projects should include facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorized vehicles.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a policy to recommend to City Council that any transportation funds obtained by the City, which are not dedicated to the automobile, be expended preferentially for active modes of transportation.</li> <li>Work with City staff and BPAC to prioritize projects which are most important for changing modal split to favor active modes of transportation.</li> <li>Continue involvement in selection of an alternative for Willamette St. from 24<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> Ave., and in further modifications to the selected alternative.</li> <li>Review policies for sidewalk infill and lobby to establish a budget for sidewalk infill.</li> </ol>	
<b>Triple Bottom Line</b>	Advise Council on use of TBL in staff analysis and council deliberations. Review Lane Livability Consortium analysis of TBL and evaluate ways to improve use of the tool.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective, timely and appropriate use of the tool.</li> <li>Evaluate and improve tool.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communiqué with City Council that addresses 1) importance of TBL for council decisions, 2) need for more intentional and systematic approach, 3) suggestions for types of projects to be analyzed, 4) commission review and feedback on TBL examples that come forward,.</li> <li>Review recommendations from Lane Livability Consortium projects and Equity and Opportunity Assessment and determine any next steps. Incorporate relevant findings into communiqué with Council as well as other promising tools.</li> </ol>	Deliverables expected in FY 15.

## Sustainability Commission FY 14 Work Plan

Topic	Topic description	Outcomes	Planned activities	Status in June 2014
<b>City budget process</b>	Provide input and recommendations to the Budget Committee as it develops the FY 15 budget.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-light the cost-savings potential from implementing climate action plans.</li> <li>• Promote value of Sustainability Program in budget deliberations.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create context and communicate urgency for ICAP, CEAP - quantify financial benefits.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Package and supplement existing information and analysis.</li> <li>b. Execute communication plan that includes outreach to partners: GreenLane, Chamber, City Club, Executive Management Team, Register Guard board.</li> <li>c. Message to Council and budget committee: importance of making investments and capturing long term savings.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Strategy for engaging in budget process, budget committee               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Determine participation at meetings, providing testimony, etc.</li> <li>b. Include other work plan topic areas where appropriate and develop key messages.</li> <li>c. Encouraging TBL analysis in budget process.</li> <li>d. Liaison with Planning Commission, CLUTAC or other to develop budget recommendations.</li> <li>e. Investigate alternative structures – melding commissions or other approaches. Invite Corvallis representative to review their coalition.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	Submitted memo to Budget Committee on Nov. 30, 2013 and delivered testimony during Committee deliberations.
<b>Carbon fee</b>	Investigate revenue neutral fee on greenhouse gas emissions, and bring back a recommendation on what effective action can be taken to advance.	Potential policy recommendation to bring forward to Council.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Coalition building – City of Eugene, EWEB and commission. Identify other potential stakeholders and regional sources of support (e.g. Sustainability Coalition in Corvallis).</li> <li>2. Review initial report from legislature and bring forward findings to Council when report is released (December 2013).               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Examine legislative report.</li> <li>b. Develop materials to present to City Council.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Monitor and review other related activities in the region, e.g. City of Portland.</li> <li>4. Update data and conclusions regarding implementation of carbon fees:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. British Columbia</li> <li>b. Microsoft</li> <li>c. Other</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. Advocate for acceptance and</li> </ol>	May 21, 2014 memo in support of Climate Recovery Ordinance submitted to council with information on carbon pricing and recent international and national climate assessments.



### Sustainability Commission FY 14 Work Plan

Topic	Topic description	Outcomes	Planned activities	Status in June 2014
			<p>implementation of carbon fee resolution by City Council.</p> <p>6. Meet with and provide materials on carbon fees for state representatives and senators representing the Eugene area.</p>	
<b>Local food policy</b>	Continue work with Council regarding recommendations on food policy submitted May 2012	Council work session discussion and direction for next steps.	<p>1. Debrief with team attending Leadership Academy on Urban Ag and Sustainable Food Systems (September 2013). Determine possible next steps and commission's role.</p> <p>2. City Council work session (Oct. 23, 2013) – determine commission's role.</p> <p>3. Cultivate partners for next steps.</p>	Council work session in October 2013. Motion proposed at City Council in June 2014 tabled pending additional council work session.
<b>Work requests</b>	Provide forum for new work requests from Council or community partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply vetting process adopted by commission in FY 2013 for identifying new work plan priorities.</li> <li>• Bring forward work requests that align with current work plan and capacity of commission.</li> </ul>	1. TBD	Climate Recovery proposal brought to commission by Our Children's Trust. Memos in support of Climate Recovery proposal submitted to council March 3, 2014 and May 21, 2014.

Date, 2014

To Eugene City Councilors.

In Envision Eugene, the Climate/Energy Action Plan, the Pedestrian Bicycle Master Plan, and other plans and policies, Eugene has repeatedly affirmed its commitment to reducing its carbon footprint and building a more sustainable future. In this context, we urge Council to reject all of the proposed designs for Beltline Highway improvements, and to direct staff to produce a plan that is more consistent with adopted City goals and policies.

While we acknowledge that Beltline is frequently congested, and that this congestion leads to a higher-than-normal rate of crashes, repeated studies have shown that you can't "build your way out of congestion." For instance, a recent article published in the National Bureau of Economic Research by Turner and Duranton elucidates "The Fundamental Law of Road Congestion": namely, that new highway construction causes a proportionate increase in driving, with no change in congestion levels. If travel behavior on Beltline remains unchanged, the new lanes, bridges and ramps proposed will soon fill with even more traffic induced by the construction--and the neighborhoods and streets surrounding Beltline will experience heavier traffic than they do now.

Fortunately, travel behavior already is changing. Both national and local counts reflect a trend toward decreasing VMT (vehicle miles travelled) that began in 2005 and has continued, independent of economic factors or gas prices. A major contributor to this trend is a demographic trend favoring compact, mixed-use neighborhoods and the preference for a variety of transportation modes rather than relying on the automobile. Beltline may well be past its peak level of traffic already. Planning more capacity for a road that will not be built for 10-15 years risks wasting money on a backward-looking project that is not needed. That money would be much better spent on the type of transportation projects for which demand is increasing: transit improvements, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and projects that expand transportation choices.

The costs of the various Beltline proposals are unconscionably high. While ODOT is assumed to provide much of the funding for Beltline improvements, those ODOT funds are severely constrained, and the local matching funds would still be substantial. Cost estimates range from \$200-\$270 million even without including the cost of acquiring the additional right-of-way that would be required. The cost of even the "cheapest" of the Beltline proposals far exceeds the total cost of all the projects currently listed for the next 20 years in the Transportation System Plan, and its heavy emphasis on automobile improvements betrays Eugene's stated commitment to multi-modal transportation choices.

The environmental costs are also unacceptably high. Simply pouring that much concrete and asphalt represents huge increases in greenhouse gas emissions,, without even accounting for the emissions of an ever-larger number of motor vehicles using the expanded facility. In addition, building another bridge across the Willamette, and expanding highways near the Delta Ponds would disrupt these important natural resources.

The proposed Beltline improvements also fail to provide social equity. While the beneficiaries of the project mostly live outside of the area, its impact would fall heavily on surrounding neighborhoods. An additional arterial over a new bridge north of Beltline would pour large numbers of vehicles into a residential neighborhood on Hunsaker--a street that has already been identified as a key connector for children walking or bicycling to school and for bicycle and pedestrian access to the Riverbank Trail System. Meanwhile, those who don't depend on driving on Beltline would see the lion's share of our limited transportation dollars spent on this one project, at the expense of other needed projects throughout the community.

We urge the City Council to request a smaller, more focused proposal to address the issues on Beltline. You might remember that 20 years ago, transportation planners found that the Ferry Street Bridge needed to be expanded to six travel lanes to avoid catastrophic gridlock and safety problems. The community rejected that proposal in favor of much more modest improvements, and the four-lane Ferry Street Bridge today functions pretty much as it did 20 years ago. We need a similarly modest, balanced community-oriented approach to Beltline.

## **Sustainability Commission FY 15 Work Plan Development Feedback from Mayor and City Manager**

### **Mayor Piercy and Councilor Zelenka**

#### Work plan priorities

Question about the timing of the next City Council goal setting session – suggestion that the commission align its work plan with the council goals

#### TBL

Mayor is interested in a report on how it's being used, what triggers its use, how it's being tracked, etc. This would also be an opportunity to educate councilors on what it contributes to decision making – that it's not about balancing or equalizing impacts but about making an informed decision by weighing the potential impacts to economy, equity and environment.

#### Envision Eugene

Discussion of residential code amendments and how neighborhood interests are driving conversations about zoning changes. How to consider implications for broader goals. Commission has a role in bringing a message to council (more than once if needed) to keep an eye on the big picture and stay true to the vision/goal of compact urban form.

Mayor feels that the topics the commission has been weighing in on have been very valuable. Any new ideas for further refining the role of the commission should be brought forward to the Mayor and Councilor Zelenka, they'd be interested in discussing them.

#### Methods for bring commission advice forward:

- 1) Go beyond submitting memos to council packet. Use public forum to highlight anything submitted to council and ask council to respond. Perhaps 5 minutes could be given at council meetings to provide overview of the memo that was included in the packet.
- 2) Work session time is hard to get, may want to look at shorter session requests (15 minutes)
- 3) Commissions and other advisory boards from regular, periodic check-ins with council.

#### Forecast of FY 15 issues

- Homelessness: perhaps an opportunity to work with the HRC
- Climate change:
  - carbon tax study
  - climate recovery ordinance
- Transportation:
  - TSP
  - Beltline – may be opportunity to work with Councilors Syrett and Clark who sit on ODOT committee
  - S. Willamette
  - EmX
- EWEB riverfront development:
  - Use of urban renewal money – opportunity to leverage sustainability outcomes
  - Development of open space and infrastructure

## City Manager Jon Ruiz

### Discussion with Chair Steve Newcomb focused on identifying best and worst outcomes.

Best:

- 1) Narrow field of topics/tasks;
- 2) more effective – “come with right stuff at the right time”
- 3) 3<sup>rd</sup> party voice to frame issues at the policy level
- 4) Provide technical expertise where appropriate (e.g. EmX)

Worst:

Being perceived as the “climate change” commission

Question: what is unique niche of the commission? Bridging policy areas such as land use and transportation; being the voice of the bigger picture.

### Review of current commission topics

- Residential density: commission can be the voice of the real consequences of neighborhood resistance.
- Carbon fee: waiting for PSU study. Commission may also want to look at new EPA rules, their impact on utilities and equity issues related to carbon allocations to states
- CEAP/ICAP/Climate Recovery: commission is tracking this
- Transportation: commission may have a role in analyzing data from the trial street reconfiguration
- Business focus: may want to come back to the roots (SBI task force and report)

### Role of the commission

Discussion of commission’s role: Evaluation? Support? Advocacy? City Manager felt commission would be useful in supporting/affirming work or initiatives that are already underway. Commission has tools for engagement with council and community that are under-utilized, e.g. addressing council at public forums.

### Recommendations from the City Manager

- Lane Livability Consortium (LLC): Think about furthering this work. Be part of larger conversations about shaping the direction, next phase of work – not just participation in isolated meetings.
- Envision Eugene: Be the voice to encourage staying on the path we’re on (e.g. EmX). Commission has a role in supporting pillars of Envision Eugene. Think about how commission can work in the interface between Envision Eugene and LLC.
- Transportation: Commission can have input on the Transportation System Plan
- Business engagement: The commission will have a branding issue here. They are not viewed as an asset by the business community. A lot of ground work is needed to build credibility.
- TBL: In the future, commission can be seen as the keeper of the TBL perspective and act as a resource for other agencies for questions and TBL review. As with the business community, need to build credibility in the social equity realm as well.